

February 3, 2022

To: House Education Committee

Re: Support for HB 4124

Good afternoon, Chair Alonso Leon, committee members.

My name is Robin Troche and I'm a twenty-year veteran educator teaching in Milwaukie. I've had the opportunity to work with Oregon's own robust proficiency standards, including work as a facilitator, training educators on how to embed and normalize feedback based on the state's standards and rubrics.

As Oregon transitioned from its rigorous state system under CIM & CAM to a multi-state-compact model based on common core state standards, I watched as what had provided for a rich conversation with parents and students based on individual longitudinal growth become instead a printable report, based on infrequent, high-stakes tests and generated by an external software vendor.

These standards and testing are loosely connected to a specific course's scope and sequence, and often don't facilitate a student's love of learning or help explore student potential. And then, in order to be best prepared for one set of assessments, we should purchase and use additional interim assessments along the way -- which will again provide a report predicting the readiness of students to take the other assessment. And each one of these assessments is a separate and standardized thing that exists outside of the narrative of the class's work together.

But in the meantime, the student (and educator) experience becomes increasingly disjointed, interrupted by high-stakes, high-anxiety performances that lack the nuance necessary to provide useful feedback to either student or teacher. So what is our why? If the motivation is to provide actionable feedback to parents, students, and educators, then support in the use of embedded authentic and ongoing assessment connected to course instruction and outcomes is a far better investment. And it is an investment we can easily explain even as we operationalize it.

As fewer colleges are requiring entrance exams like the ACT and SAT, it'll be important for us as a state to explore district requirements for participation in PSAT testing and whether the information gleaned is of pertinent value related to the academic path of each student and whether it serves us in the ways we want it to for student growth.

Without a clear sense of purpose and purposeful design, agitation is the most common outcome of standardized performance assessments within elementary and secondary classroom environments. What is needed most, especially now, is for us to ensure we are moving toward a balanced assessment system, and we can only do that by taking inventory of what's out there on the district level requirements. I support House Bill 4124, and I urge the committee to pass the bill.

Thanks for your time.

Robin Troche  
Educator in Milwaukie